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## Messages from the Provost

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## **Delana Gajdosik-Nivens Named Assistant Vice President for Strategic Initiatives**

Delana Gajdosik-Nivens, professor of chemistry, has been named Assistant Vice President for Strategic Initiatives. Her appointment is effective July 1, 2022.

“In her 22 years beginning at Armstrong and now Georgia Southern University, Delana has proven herself to be a committed leader of our vision as a public-impact university,” says Carl L. Reiber, Georgia Southern University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. “She is an accomplished instructor, researcher, and community partner, and I look forward to working with her to advance the academic mission of the university.”

As assistant vice president, Dr. Gajdosik-Nivens will be responsible for the Division of Academic Affairs initiatives to increase the enrollment of adult students, seek Carnegie Community Engaged status, build transfer and other enrollment partnerships with regional institutions, improve the Division’s use of data in decision making, and build unique and innovative programming to attract future students, faculty, and staff.



Dr. Gajdosik-Nivens began her career at Armstrong Atlantic State University in 2000 as a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Engineering. Since 2010, she has held a variety of administrative roles in Academic Affairs, including Associate Provost for Student Engagement and Success where she oversaw various offices including FYE, Testing, Honors, International Education, Hispanic Outreach, Advising, Military Education and Outreach, and TRiO. In 2016, she was appointed dean of Armstrong's College of Science and Technology and subsequently the College of Science and Mathematics at Georgia Southern University immediately following consolidation in 2018.

Among her many accomplishments, Dr. Gajdosik-Nivens has been instrumental in the creation of three new degree programs including the BS in Sustainability Science, the College's first Ph.D. program, and the addition of an AS degree to the online campus. She is currently serving as the PI of the USG-STEM Education Improvement Program and the US DOE McNair Scholars program, and has received over \$5.5M in grant funding, with much of that funding directed toward increasing undergraduate research, improving STEM education, and increasing diversity in the sciences. She has a talent for developing academic partnerships with other institutions such as Savannah State University, South University, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Mercer University, and Effingham STEM Academy, and community groups like Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia, where she serves on the Advisory Board. Since 2018, the amount of annual giving to the College has doubled and research funding has increased 250%.

Dr. Gajdosik-Nivens is eager to leverage her experiences to advance the community partnerships that will support our academic mission as a public impact university; "I am excited to bring together my 12 years of varying academic administrative experiences to a new role that will allow me to use my skills in creative problem solving to assist the entire Division of Academic Affairs as we face an ever-changing and challenging landscape of higher education. I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate across the Divisions to help Georgia Southern innovate and maintain its status as a first-choice institution for students, staff, faculty, and the community."

Dr. Gajdosik-Nivens holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh and a Ph.D. in analytical chemistry from the University of South Carolina. She is a 2016 graduate of the USG Executive Leadership Institute and received a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workplace Certification from University of Florida's Muma College of Business. She is the recipient of the 2020 Stanley Israel Regional Award for Advancing Diversity in the Chemical Sciences from the American Chemical Society.

Professor Will Lynch, Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, will step into the role of interim dean of the College of Science and Mathematics. Dr. Lynch's long tenure and leadership will be an asset to the College during this transition. The search for a permanent dean is planned for the 2022-2023 academic year.